

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-07 COME-00 AGR-05 TRSE-00 OMB-01

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8046

INFO AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

AMCONSUL BOMBAY

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

AMCONSUL MADRAS

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PASS AGRICULTURE

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAGR, IN

SUBJECT: SHINDE'S STATEMENT ON INDIAN FOODGRAIN PRODUCTION

IN A STATEMENT IN PARLIAMENT ON APRIL 9, MINISTER OF STATE FOR AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION, A.P. SHINDE, INDICATED THAT ALTHOUGH FINAL FIGURES WOULD NOT BE AVAILABLE FOR QUITE SOME TIME, HIS ASSESSMENT WAS THAT THIS YEAR'S RABI FOODGRAIN CROP (LARGELY SPRING HARVESTED) WOULD BE A RECORD 43-44 MILLION METRIC TONS, INCLUDING A RECORD WHEAT CROP OF MORE THAN 27 MILLION TONS. THIS WAS IN SPITE OF THE FACT THAT THIS YEAR WAS NOT VERY IDEAL BECAUSE OF MARGINAL POWER SHORTAGES AND OTHER FACTORS WHICH HE DECLINED TO GO INTO AT THE TIME. SHINDE ALSO INDICATED THAT THIS YEAR'S KHARIF FOODGRAIN CROP (FALL/EARLY WINTER HARVESTED) HAS BEEN UNFAVORABLE AND IMPLIED THAT TOTAL FOODGRAIN PRODUCTION DURING 1974-75 (KHARIF AND RABI) WOULD BE 104-105 MILLION TONS AS COMPARED TO 103.6 MILLION TONS PRODUCED IN 1973-74.

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COMMENT: ESTIMATES OF RABI PRODUCTION AT THIS STAGE ARE AT BEST INFORMED GUESSES. STATE ESTIMATES OF PRODUCTION BASED ON CROP CUTTING SAMPLES ARE PROBABLY STILL BEING RECEIVED BY THE CENTER FOR THIS YEAR'S KHARIF CROP. IT WILL PROBABLY BE ANOTHER MONTH OR SO BEFORE THE CENTER EVEN BEGINS RECEIVING SUCH INFORMATION ON THE RABI CROP. DURING THE LAST COUPLE OF YEARS, PUBLIC STATEMENTS BY GOI OFFICIAL ON TOTAL FOODGRAIN PRODUCTION AT THIS STAGE OF THE YEAR HAVE PROVEN TO BE OFF UP TO 5-6 MILLION TONS FROM WHAT IS FINALLY REPORTED BY THE GOI. MEMBERS OF THE AGRICULTURAL ATTACHE'S OFFICE ARE CURRENTLY VISITING KEY FOODGRAIN PRODUCING STATES TO OBTAIN AN EVALUATION OF THE PROBABLY CROP OUTTURN. HOPEFULLY SHINDE WILL PROVE TO BE CLOSER TO THE MARK THIS YEAR THAN HAS BEEN THE CASE IN RECENT PREVIOUS YEARS.

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